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FACT SHEET

Hilmand Province

OVERVIEW

USAID estimated support for Hilmand from January 2002 – December 2010: \$457.4 million

Estimated population: 820,000 (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Central Statistics Office: Estimated Population of Afghanistan 2008 – 2009)

Capital: Lashkar Gah

Note: UK-led PRT



The province of Hilmand is sparsely populated by a Pashtun majority with Tajik, Baloch, and Hazara minorities. The Hilmand River, the longest in Afghanistan, provides water for the province's agriculture-based economy. Although traditional crops have included cereal, vegetables, tobacco, and cotton, in recent years the province has become one of the world's biggest exporters of poppy. The province's infrastructure is relatively well developed, although the region continues to struggle with security issues.

AGRICULTURE

Goal: Increase agricultural sector jobs and income through a) increased agricultural productivity by increasing farmer access to inputs and effective extension services; b) invigorated agribusiness by increasing linkages between farmers, markets, credit, and trade corridors; and c) rehabilitated watersheds and improved irrigation infrastructure. Also, increase Afghans' confidence in their government by increasing Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock's (MAIL) capacity to deliver services and promote the private sector and farmer associations through direct budget and technical assistance.

Summary: USAID is preparing farmers to participate in a modern agricultural economy through veterinary services, improved water management, training, and contract farming.

Current Activities:

- Provide credit to commercial farmers for the purpose of purchasing agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, and animal feed
- Expand the coverage area of the Farm Service Center (FSC) to reach new farming communities.
- Enhance the FSC by establishing a demonstration greenhouse and adding greenhouse development materials to the FSC inventory
- Provide technical assistance and technical training to area farmers
- Provide technical assistance to farmers to enhance their capacity for orchard management
- Provide technical assistance to poultry and kitchen garden beneficiaries to enhance their capacity in poultry management
- Improve the quality of grapes through vineyard trellising

Accomplishments:

- Created jobs and income-generating opportunities through cash-for-work projects for more than 60,000 people (provided more than \$9 million in wages that included labor-intensive irrigation canal cleaning and repair and improving tertiary roads to provide access along the value chain)



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- Improved market access for approximately 25,000 farmers by rehabilitating seven kilometers of farm-to-market roads
- Distributed more than 27,000 chicks and almost 11,000 kg of feed to five local distributors
- Increased farmers' agricultural skills through nearly 800 demonstration training plots
- Established self-sustaining veterinary field units, which provided more than one million vaccinations and more than 10,000 medications to livestock
- Irrigated more than 50,000 hectares of land through the rehabilitation of 2,000 km of irrigation and drainage canals to improve farmers' access to water for their crops
- Supported 1,240 local farmers through agriculture vouchers for orchard and vegetable crop diversification, improved corn production, and irrigation and orchard maintenance
- Provided small grants to support farmers' cooperatives and farmer associations approved by the provincial Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
- Distributed 549,300 fruit tree saplings and grape vines, along with 200 metric tons of fertilizer to 1,240 farmers, and improved 248 hectares of irrigated land across four districts
- Used vouchers that required the farmers to pay 15 percent of the cost of the materials
- Trained 70 master farmers who trained 1,220 farmers in the safe use of pesticide and insecticide in four districts
- Installed 23 greenhouses and drip irrigation systems and introduced farmers to new vegetable crops
- Produced 222,000 broiler chicks, 315,000 layer chicks, upward of 20 million table eggs, 334,000 kilograms of meat, and 449,000 kilograms of poultry feed through the Hilmand Poultry Project
- Developed 62 commercial growing operations and introduced appropriate poultry feeding, health care, bio-security, and business management practices throughout the value chain through the Hilmand Poultry Project
- Established the Hilmand FSC that provides agricultural inputs and services, and has produced sales of \$1.2 million and created 51 full-time equivalent jobs
- Approved a loan of \$242,000 to the Hilmand FSC to extend credit to small commercial farmers
- Trained 2,800 farmers in agriculture related activities
- Assisted 525 individuals with loan guarantees that increase
- Contributed to the development of a new rangeland law
- Trained Kuchi leaders in conflict resolution
- Supported the provincial Kuchi Shura
- Established 323 hectares of new orchards and training on land preparation, layout, and planting techniques for 1,459 farmers
- Established 50 kitchen gardens and 25 poultry units to expand the role of woman role in food production

DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE

Goal: Build the capacity of government institutions to improve the quality of government services to Afghan citizens. Support independent media institutions and advocacy groups.

Summary: USAID supports democracy and governance in Hilmand Province through activities that assist the development of the justice sector, media, civil-society, and good governance.

Current Activities:



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- Support the Radio Sabawoon station in Lashkar gah, Helmand with program funding and technical support as part of a national network of local radio stations that broadcast independent national satellite programming from Salam Watandar
- Support Afghanistan Center for Training and Development as an intermediate civil-society support organization, which will organize community dialogues, run resource centers, monitor grantees, and provide capacity building to target civil-society organizations
- Train provincial and district-level civil servants in the five common functions highlighted in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy: financial management, human resources management, procurement, project management, and strategy and policy development
- Embed technical advisors in provincial line departments, who provide on-the-job training to civil servants to increase service delivery
- Train new Provincial Council Members on the council's legal rights, monitoring, and oversight, and getting them to communicate with and represent constituents with government entities
- Provide \$25,000/month through the Performance Based Governors Fund for governors to cover operational expenditures and perform community outreach projects

Accomplishments:

- Supported the development of the justice sector through the publication and distribution of judicial reference laws
- Supported the 2010 voter registration update exercise; assisted domestic and international observation missions, trained political parties and candidate poll agents, conducted a series of poll surveys ahead of the 2010 election, and provided civic education and media outreach activities to promote broad-based participation in elections and government
- Supported the Enjeel Association of United Sisters for a citizen's platform for gender equality project
- Developed and trained judges and court administrators in the Afghanistan Court Administration System
- Provided core skills and ethics training to improve the understanding of current international judicial standards
- Promoted legal and human rights awareness, including women's rights, through public education campaigns in a variety of media, and provided institutional, capacity-building training to civil-society organizations
- Provided training and support to provincial councils, which improved professionalism, knowledge, and skills, resulting in more effective and transparent leadership
- Facilitated consensus-building efforts through civic-education training and dialogue sessions with mullahs and Sharia scholars
- Supported voter registration, assisted domestic and international observation missions, trained political parties and independent poll agents, conducted a series of poll surveys, and support the 2009 presidential and provincial council elections

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Goal: Promote a thriving, legal economy led by the private sector.

Summary: USAID promotes economic development in Hilmand Province through expanding access to automated banking services, telecommunications, and grants to small businesses.

Current Activities:



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- Improve economic related information and data collection activities in Hilmand Province to build Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) regional economic research and analytical functions introduced in DAB zone offices
- Support the revenue reconciliation team of the Hilmand Mustofiat, centered on accurate revenue collection posting and reporting to center
- Hiring and deploying of two Ministry of Finance (MoF) provincial budgeting officers to support provincial budgeting training and coordination with line ministries via the soon to be established provincial budgeting training hub in Hilmand Province
- Promote improved cash management operations with regard to availability and quality of bank notes in circulation
- Construct eight market stalls in Nawa Barakzai District
- Support community-owned and managed Islamic Investment and Finance Cooperatives, which provide financial services to members

Accomplishments:

- Installed four district communications network centers and one village communications network operated by Afghan Telecom, that provide telephones, Internet, and photocopying services to both the district government officials and the public
- Implemented an automated core banking system, installed additional communications technology for bank staff, and expanded and refurbished the provincial branch of DAB that operates as the paying agent for the government and disburses all social, payroll, and procurement payments (services such as these increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the social and economic infrastructure of Afghanistan, contributing to the development of the public and private sectors)
- Connected provincial government offices in Hilmand Province with Kabul through broadband technology (this government communications network facilitated active, transparent governance by linking federal and local level decision makers)
- Installed the Revenue Reconciliation and Accounting database in the Hilmand Mustofiat, which has dramatically reduced processing times of Afghan government revenue receipts, production on revenue reports, and uploading into the consolidated MoF Financial Management System
- Rolled out a provincial budgeting training initiative in Hilmand Province
- Conducted a five-day provincial budgeting training program for more than 40 provincial representatives on foundations of public financial management, planning and budgeting practices, and the MoF's public financial management reforms in budgeting, treasury, and aid management
- Improved business development and marketing skills through the formation and strengthening of three business associations including a women's handicraft association, a carpenter's association, and a metalworker's association (these associations received grants to obtain formal registration and provide services to association members)
- Supported 195 small and medium enterprises through association grants, business development training, and internship programs
- Increased commerce by improving marketplace infrastructure, such as the electrification of the Sangin Marketplace to extend business hours and improve security
- Trained and provided work opportunities to 66 high school students to date under a capacity-building internship program
- Promoted economic expansion and private-sector development through micro-credit lending, and disbursed more than \$1.7 million in microfinance loans and small-business loans through USAID-funded financial institutions



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- Established five Islamic Investment and Finance Cooperatives with more than 7,130 members (8.3 percent women)
- Disbursed more than \$3.9 million in Sharia-compliant loans

EDUCATION

Goal: Improve the quality of basic education through increased availability of primary school textbooks and improve the livelihoods of urban and rural communities through increased literacy and employability instruction.

Summary: USAID supports educational improvements in Hilmand through three national education programs. USAID provides radio-based teacher support programs, literacy and vocational skills training, printed textbooks, and constructs and/or refurbishes schools.

Current Activities:

- Provide radio-based teacher support programs to approximately 1,700 teachers
- Provide an 18-month program in literacy and productive skills to 2,150 youth and adults in 20 communities through 88 literacy centers
- Support 100 community-based classes in Lash-kar-gah, Nad Ali, and Nawar-e-Barekzai districts with approximately 3,000 students enrolled in emergency community-based education
- Support 100 emergency community-based classes for internally displaced populations/refugees in Lash-kar-gah, Nad Ali, and Nawar-e-Barekzai districts
- Continue textbook support

Accomplishments:

- Established 88 literacy centers for 2,150 youth and adults in 20 communities
- Constructed 16 schools that increased access to education for nearly 4,000 students
- Printed more than 1.6 million textbooks

HEALTH

Goal: Improve the access to and quality of health services and increase the abilities of individuals, families, and communities to protect their health.

Summary: USAID's principal health investments in Hilmand Province come through nationwide programs, including support for family planning products and a provision of refresher training courses for nurses and physicians.

Current Activities:

- Support the Provincial Public Health Office and the Provincial Public Health Coordination Committee to strengthen the technical, leadership, and management capacity of the provincial health team to support the delivery of Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) and Essential Package of Hospital Services (EPHS)
- Support social marketing of health and family planning products (such as contraceptives, water purification agents, and oral rehydration salts for diarrhea) through 47 private-sector outlets
- Support the Provincial Public Health Office and the Provincial Public Health Coordination Committee to strengthen the technical, leadership, and management capacity of the provincial health team to support the delivery of BPHS and EPHS



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- Provide in-service training and capacity building to non-governmental organizations and health facility staff
- Distribute community awareness materials for tuberculosis: diagnostic, treatment, and training packages including a database information system and maintenance equipment for the database
- Oversee the implementation of tuberculosis treatment, training in standard operational procedures for tuberculosis infection control, and reporting of tuberculosis data in Provincial Coordination Committee meetings
- Train community health worker trainers and community health supervisors, and orient new non-government organization staff, to expand the use of postpartum family planning
- Train provincial health officers to develop monthly joint monitoring plans to support the delivery of BPHS and EPHS
- Increase the technical and managerial skills of healthcare workers through refresher training for doctors, nurses, and lab technicians

Accomplishments:

- Trained 17,000 pharmacists, shura members, and community health workers on safe drinking water, oral rehydration salts, and birth spacing to increase the quality of preventative healthcare in the province

INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: Improve infrastructure in order to create legal economic opportunities, promote freedom of movement, and facilitate delivery of government and social services.

Summary: The infrastructure program in Hilmand Province focuses on the construction of roads, water, and energy facilities, while building the capacity of local workers and supporting the provincial economy through the use of locally available materials.

Current Activities:

- Rehabilitate the 77 km Garmser to Lashkar Gah Road to extend access to trade and social services to rural areas
- Maintain the 110 km Hilmand section of the Ring Road extending to Lashkar Gah, and strengthen the capacity of provincial staff of the Ministry of Public Works to implement road maintenance through Afghan contractors
- Provide operations and maintenance support to the Lashkar Gah Power Plant
- Renovate the Durai Junction substation
- Renovate the Kajaki substation and local distribution system to add 18 megawatts of renewable power to the Southeast Power System and customers will see an increase in reliability of electricity supply
- Install 144 solar street lights in Nawzad District

Accomplishments:

- Rehabilitated Kajaki's existing turbine generators (units #1 and #3) to restore the power generating capacity of the Kajaki Hydroelectric Power Plant to its original capacity of 33 megawatts
- Built and provided fuel for a diesel power plant in Lashkar Gah to supplement output from Kajaki and provide backup electricity for residents of Lashkar Gah
- Rehabilitated the Hilmand section of the Ring Road in cooperation with the government of Saudi Arabia, and constructed/rehabilitated the 49 km road linking the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah to the Ring



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Road (the Ring Road through Hilmand Province increased trade and commerce, reduced travel time by up to 65 percent, and decreased transport costs)

- Constructed the two-kilometer Nawa District Center Road to facilitate access to government services
- Constructed or rehabilitated 265 wells/water supply outlets to increase access to water supply, improving the health of people and livestock and augmenting crop yields
- Installed 800 latrines for internally displaced persons and trained more than 25,000 people on hygiene and sanitation
- Trained more than 500 mechanics in operating and maintaining wells
- Improved local capacity to operate and maintain water and sanitation facilities to ensure that citizens will continue to have access to clean water

STABILIZATION

Goal: Improve stability, extend the reach of the Afghan government, and promote stabilization efforts that lay the groundwork for medium- to long-term development activities.

Summary: USAID creates linkages and builds confidence between communities and the local government through small-scale infrastructure, training, and community development projects.

Current Activities:

- Work with the provincial reconstruction team rule of law advisors to complete ongoing construction of the Hilmand courthouse and provide furnishings and ready the ground for a handover to the government
- Refurbish sports facilities and provide sports equipment for schools in Lashkar Gah and Gereshk districts
- Provide a venue for youth sports by constructing Gereshk District sports stadium
- Provide solar lighting along main highway and access routes in Nahri Sarraj District and in five key areas of Nad Ali District
- Provide furniture and information technology equipment for district governors' compounds in Gereshk and Nad Ali and for the Gereshk district governor's guesthouse
- Rehabilitate the Lashkar Gah Public Community Centre to help provide a public gathering space
- Support the Department of Public Health's child hygiene program in Lashkar Gah by distributing 11,000 hygiene kits and providing hygiene training to children in six schools
- Provide furnishings and equipment to support the opening of the Gereshk Drug Addiction Clinic in Nahri Sarraj District
- Support community-level labor intensive programs that improve city infrastructure, support community development priorities, and offer temporary employment (wages earned through these public and community works projects enable the poor to purchase food for themselves and their families)
- Repair and build five gravel compacted roads in Garmsir District
- Improve flood protection in Garmser District, rehabilitate gabion walls and flood protection walls in Loy Darweshan and Hazar Joft districts, and rehabilitate the flood protection wall at the Lakari District bazaar
- Expand local media capacity through training in Garmser District
- Provide tents for schools in 15 locations and school kits south of the snakeshead in Garmser District
- Rehabilitate Balakino School in Marjeh District
- Clean canals in Marjeh District
- Rehabilitate bazaars in Marjeh District
- Rehabilitate pedestrian bridges in Garmser and Marjeh districts
- Provide tailored assistance to war-affected families



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Accomplishments:

- Refurbished provincial and district government facilities throughout Hilmand Province
- Equipped the Musa Qala District School
- Provided school supplies (chairs, desks, books, erasers, and pens) in Musa Qala District
- Provided vocational training in child and adult literacy, electrical repair, motorcycle repair, and tailoring throughout Musa Qala District
- Created linkages and built confidence between communities and the district, provincial, and central levels of government primarily through small-scale infrastructure projects in Nahri Sarraj, Lashkar Gah, Nawa, and Khaneshin districts
- Rehabilitated urban infrastructure in Lashkar Gah District, the provincial capital, including the main community center and the Karzai Football Stadium
- Trained 100 women in kitchen gardening and an additional 100 women in tailoring and embroidery
- Repaired government infrastructure through community grants, providing government support in the newly-cleared districts of Nawa and Khaneshin
- Improved education infrastructure for schools in Lashkar and Gereshk districts by constructing sports facilities, latrines, boundary walls and access bridges and repairing school furniture
- Helped 17,300 people through labor intensive community level programs that improve city infrastructure, support community development priorities, and offer temporary employment
- Rebuilt more than 1,200 houses in Garmsir and Gereshk districts damaged during coalition forces operations against the Taliban, despite limited access due to hostilities
- Repaired culverts and constructed footbridges in Garmsir District
- Provided tents for 12 schools and recreational equipment to playgrounds in parks and common areas in Garmsir District
- Conducted training to expand contractor capacity in Garmser District
- Increased range and capacity of Radio Garmser through equipment provision
- Rehabilitated district government building to bring Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock representation back to Garmser District
- Rehabilitated Mir Kalay School in Garmser District
- Refurbished schools and provided school kits to primary schools in Marjeh District
- Sponsored International Women's Day celebration